



Research
Rehearse
Relax

Once you have practiced asking and answering questions, the next step is to relax and remind yourself that: **There's no question you can't answer. You are well suited to the position. You would be an asset to the company.** Visualize yourself in the interview feeling confident. Get a good night's sleep beforehand, arrive a few minutes early, take a few deep breaths and seize the day.

Research Before the Interview

Do your homework before interviews by researching the interviewer, the company and the industry. There are a variety of ways to research:

- Library (books, periodicals, magazines, etc.)
- Literature from company's public relations department
- Annual reports
- Search the internet

You should become familiar with the organization's products, structure, services, financial status, competitors, reputation and any recent major changes. In addition, try to discover information about the person you will meet (background, style, education, and their "hot button" issues).

Prep for the Interview

To fully prepare for any interview you should identify some things:

- Transferable skills
- Key accomplishments
- Management style
- Unique selling or promotional features
- Personal and professional strengths

One of the best ways to prepare for interviewing is by writing out your answers to key interview questions then practicing them. Career counselors and outplacement specialists alike, remind transitioning executives and professionals of the necessity to look and act the part of a self-confident and successful person even if one does not particularly feel it.

With a friend or co-worker, organize and review your answers to both tough and basic questions.

In preparing your answers to these questions, think of yourself as a candidate in a political campaign. A skillful candidate is focused on the message he or she wants to communicate. Rather than being led by the interviewer's questions, candidates stay in control with responses that articulate what they want the listener to remember. Ask yourself, "What is my goal in the interview?"

The most important question is "Why should we hire you?" Answering this will require research and preparation. You must first identify and understand the needs of the company and the problems that the ideal candidate must be prepared to solve. Information sources include networking contacts, search firms, vendors, the press, the Internet, news outlets. Be prepared to convince the interviewer that you are uniquely qualified to make a contribution.

The more you practice your answers, the more your confidence will grow. Rehearse until you can easily answer questions with clarity, spontaneity and crispness.

Everyone can use interview practice. You might be surprised to know that even the most extroverted, self-confident, verbal, "sales-person type" needs help in thinking through, organizing the answers to and rehearsing the interview questions.

The Interview

Relax — you are ready and confident. Arrive about 10-15 minutes ahead of time so that you can make sure that your appearance is intact.

- Act like a consultant not an applicant. Think of yourself in problem-solving mode, in partnership with your interviewer.
- Engage in a dialogue, don't put yourself in a question/answer mode. Let silence occur.
- Present your value, and always protect your dignity and self worth. Be engaging and enthusiastic.

Always leave the interview with a knowledge of the next step and with a sense of how your candidacy will be evaluated. Ask: "How would you like to proceed? Have I provided you with the information you need? Where are you in the process? What will happen next? When should I follow up?"

INTERVIEWING

No matter how well qualified you are for a job or how articulate you are about your strengths and experience, there is nothing that can replace preparation.

The Internet has an incredible amount of information to assist you in exploring career information, seeking employment and researching colleges or training programs. Remember that you can get free access to the Internet at your local public library, community college, or nearest NH Employment Security Resource Center. Listed below are some excellent websites:

www.quintcareers.com Quintessential Special sections for teens, college students and all other job seekers (by industry, geography and job seeker type) make this site a comprehensive resource.

www.careersandcolleges.com This site covers the gamut of career and college information.

www.edonline.com Sponsored by Education Online, this is a guide to college entrance preparation and features several self-evaluation checklists.

INTERVIEWING WEBSITES

www.careers.org This site is a directory of career directories.

www.embark.com Find the right college, graduate school, on-line learning program, and get recruited. This site also features an adult education guide for Lifelong Learning.

www.monster.com Monster Career Center features over 1,700 pages of targeted career advice for all levels and areas of employment.

www.careermag.com Comprehensive site with information and resources on every aspect of work for employers, workers, and job seekers.

www.doi.gov/octc/ivintro.html Guide to Interviews available on the U.S. Dept. of the Interior's website.

Adapted from: Nebraska Careers and Education 2002 Publication

INTERVIEWS THAT GET THE JOB

How Much Do You Think You Know About The "Interview"

Take the following true-false quiz to discover those areas you need to improve upon to give a top-notch interview.

| | True or False |
|--|---------------|
| Dress similar to, or perhaps a little better than, people working on the job for which you are interviewing. | _____ |
| Wear your best perfume or after-shave to the interview. | _____ |
| Any hair style is fine, including beaded and braided styles, as long as it is neat and clean. | _____ |
| Facial hair on men (beards/ moustaches) is acceptable to most employers. | _____ |
| Carry a briefcase to the interview. | _____ |
| If he needs one, a man should get a haircut as close as possible to the day of the interview. | _____ |
| Bring a friend with you for moral support. | _____ |
| Wait until the interviewer offers you a chair before sitting down. | _____ |
| Do not smoke, even if offered a cigarette during an interview. | _____ |
| Assume a submissive role during the interview to help you land the job. | _____ |
| Wanting to work for a smaller or larger company is an acceptable reason for wanting to leave a job. | _____ |

Source: Connecticut Department of Labor Occupational Research Section

True — Many companies have banned smoking altogether - so never smoke
True — Don't sit down before being offered a chair.
pendent.
False — Bringing a friend with you shows the employer that you are too dependent.
you only get a haircut for special occasions.
False — A slight trim only. Freshly cut hair gives the interviewer the idea that during the interview.
False — Carry a briefcase only if it contains important papers you will need.
trimmed.
locality. If you must have a beard or moustache, make sure that it is clean and
False — Most employers prefer a clean-shaven face, although this varies by rejection.
ceptable to the interviewer. If you decide to wear one, be prepared for possible
False Conservative hair styles work best - extreme hair styles may not be acceptable to the interviewer. If you decide to wear one, be prepared for possible
after-shave, be sure it is a very small amount.
False — Many people are allergic to any scent. If you must wear perfume or this level.
interviewing for a higher level job, dress similar to those already working at
True — The employer must be able to visualize you working on the job. If

QUIZ ANSWERS

Tips for the Interview

List five adjectives that describe you then list five adjectives that would describe the ideal candidate for the position. Do they agree? What are the gaps?

Read the company's annual report.

Make note of adjectives used to describe the leadership and employees.

Is the culture one where you will be happy?

Be prepared with brief anecdotes about your work that show qualities the company values.